

presents, in the eight panels, S. Gabriel, the Blessed Virgin, S. John Baptist, S. Thomas, S. Catherine, S. George, S. Christopher, and S. Margaret, with beneath eight angels, alternately bearing the instruments of the Passion, and playing musical instruments. The angel who bears the spear has the countenance of having been a fallen one. What is the reason of this peculiarity? This font has been restored, provided with lead lining and drain, placed in the tower, and surmounted with a very lofty oaken canopy. The west door has been shielded by a solid screen. We suppose that the fear of drafts made this necessary, but we should then have made the screen as simple as possible, and not covered it with shallow tracery. We wish Mr. Godwin had not given nosings to his chancel steps. The nave-alleys are paved with red and black tiles. The corbels supporting the nave-roof are new, and represent the Apostles: they struck us as being too large. The exterior of the church (built of flint, with stone dressings) has been entirely restored, which involved a partial rebuilding. With few exceptions, all the funds necessary for the restoration were raised in the parish, and contributed with most perfect good will. We most heartily congratulate the people of Ware on so good a work."

We will only add that the church originally was painted and gilt from floor to ridge. The walls were covered with figures the size of life. The new polychromic decorations were executed under the direction of the architect, by Mr. W. H. Rogers. The font cover, to which reference is made, was carved by Philip, Wynne, and Lumsden; as was also the altar rail. The corbels and other stone carving were by Barrett; the tile paving by Minton: the general contractors were Messrs. Carter and Ellis.

Annexed we give an illustration of the easternmost window of the south aisle,—a nice specimen of the Decorated period.

TOWER OF "LA MARTORANA," PALERMO.

THE annexed representation offers a sketch of a portion of the tower which is attached to the principal entrance of the church of "La Martorana," at Palermo.

This tower is supposed to have formed originally an entrance to some Saracenic edifice, as, before the extensions of the present church, it stood quite detached, and was separated from the immediate precincts of the church. When viewed from the atrium below, it presents a very rich and picturesque appearance. The second story of the tower (i. e. the lowest in the engraving) is exceedingly elegant, and has a decidedly Oriental character. This portion is doubtless of an earlier date than the two upper stories, which were added about the year 1143-5, and which partake more of that style of architecture used by the Normans in France than in Sicily. Owing to this latter circumstance, the composition, viewed entire, offers less unity of design than might be wished, and is perhaps open to criticism; its individual features, however, possess considerable merit, and show no lack of imagination on the part of the designers.

The use of the broad Oriental billet, or rustic, which we here see surrounding the windows, was greatly in fashion both amongst the Oriental and Norman architects of Palermo, and is a characteristic which, if successfully treated, would give great decision to a design. Incrustations of black lava are freely and tastefully applied in each story.

The church was founded in A.D. 1113, by George Antiochenus, a follower of the faith as observed in the Greek Church. In A.D. 1139 he became an admiral of King Roger II. An inscription, probably placed in the church at a period subsequent to the latter date, informs us that the Admiral Antiochenus was the founder.

Originally the church was dedicated to "Santa Maria l'Annunziata;" but Aloisia, the wife of "Godfrey de Martorana," who founded the adjoining convent in A.D. 1193, and repaired and extended the church to its present dimensions, obtained from King Alphonso the privilege of changing the name it usually bore to that of her own; "La Martorana."

The interior of the church contains some

TOWER OF "LA MARTORANA," PALERMO.



excellent specimens of Mosaic pictures and ornaments, and is full of interest, presenting a very fair example of a church planned according to the Greek ritual. W. L. B. G.

MANAGEMENT OF ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITIONS.

It has been suggested more than once in your journal that architects should meet together and lay down a set of regulations as to on what terms they would furnish designs in competition. This is precisely what they ought to do; and though I am not a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects, I should certainly, out of respect for it, preferring such a movement emanate from that Royally chartered body. As yet it has done nothing further than to issue ten years ago a certainly very excellent report on competitions; but as ten years' experience has proved that "reports" will not remedy the evil, I hope the institute will take up the matter and convene a meeting of architects, to agree to "a set of regulations as to on what terms" they will henceforth submit designs in public competition. I am quite sure any half a dozen architects might easily do this; and, with a little energy, and a sensible set of regulations, secure the combined signatures of nine-tenths of their brethren, great and small, throughout the kingdom, pledged to compete only on such and such "regulations." To such a body committees would be the first to pay respect, as the institute themselves thus declare in their report on competitions, to which I have just alluded.

"Your committee" . . . have the greatest reason to believe, from the information they have obtained, that, in a very great majority

of cases of competition, the committees, or parties to whom judgment is confided, are quite ready to acknowledge themselves deficient in the means of fulfilling their duty, when once the nature of that duty is candidly and temperately explained to them; and that any suggestions will be favourably received, when offered in proper terms, and at a proper season."

The proper season, Sir, is invariably before designs shall have been obtained: the proper parties to suggest and explain are the council of the Royal Institute of British Architects; but, failing them, it is quite proper for the Architectural Association, or for any half dozen architects, to suggest, to explain, nay, to command in this matter.

As to the "proper terms" (or regulations call them), I would submit for the consideration of the profession a few hints, preparatory, I hope, to "a monster meeting."

Instructions to Architects should be as simple as possible, and where really no penchant for any particular style exists, should say nothing about such matters. Thus committees should not say "the style of architecture to be Grecian, and the order Ionic," and straightway award their first premium to a Gothic design, and their second premium to a ditto—(a fact).

Drawings should be, so far as is consistent with the intelligible delineation of the design, as few, as small, and as free from cost as possible. The exact kind and number of them, and, wherever practicable, the exact length and breadth of each, should be stated, with a view to uniformity, portability, and compactness, and consequent facility of comparison one with another. The size of perspective views, the point whence taken, their mode of execu-